DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 373 835 JC 940 486

AUTHOR Walters, Sarah J.; Giovannini, Gene
TITLE Institutional Effectiveness for a State-Wide Technical College System.
PUB DATE Mar 94
NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the North Central Association (99th, Chicago, IL, March 27-29, 1994).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Accreditation (Institutions); College Outcomes Assessment; Community Colleges; *Evaluation Criteria; *Institutional Evaluation; Multicampus Colleges; *Organizational Effectiveness; *Organizational Objectives; Self Evaluation (Groups); Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS *Indiana Vocational Technical College

ABSTRACT

Indiana Vocational Technical College (IVTC) ranks among the largest two-year public colleges in the country, offering degrees in 40 broad technologies, and enrolling 61,00 students at 13 regional campuses. The multi-campus system is undergoing a significant shift in its accreditation status with the North Central Association (NCA) from 13 regional accreditations to reaccreditation as a single institution. To prepare for the NCA accreditation visit, IVTC embarked on a 24-month statewide self-study. An Academic Program Review Model addressing curriculum review and administrative program review was initiated in spring 1994. Other portions of the plan address the functional areas of student services, human resources, business and industry training, and college administration. An Institutional Effectiveness Committee identified the following effectiveness indicators: (1) course completion rates; (2) transfer rates; (3) basic skills assessment; (4) general education outcomes; (5) student/faculty course evaluation; (6) program outcome measures; (7) retention; (8) enrollment trends; (9) full-time equivalency (FTE) trends; (10) program and faculty FTE; (11) credit hours taught; (12) degrees awarded; (13) graduate surveys; (14) employer surveys; (15) advisory committee survey; (16) program accreditation audit; (17) faculty credential audit; (18) student opinion survey; (19) former student survey; and (20) student demographic profile. The development of an institutional effectiveness plan must be anchored in the institution's mission and based on broad participation from all of the college's constituencies. (KP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 373 835

Institutional Effectiveness for a State-Wide Technical College System

Sarah J. Walters
Gene Giovannini

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

S. Walters

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the North Central Association (99th, Chicago, IL, March 27-29, 1994).

TC 940 4186

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Institutional Effectiveness for a State-wide Technical College System
by: Sarah J. Walters and Gene Giovannini

Indiana Vocational Technical College (Ivy Tech State College) ranks among the largest two-year public colleges in the country offering degrees in 40 broad technologies at thirteen regional campuses and enrolling 61,000 students annually. This multi-campus system is undergoing a significant shift in its accreditation status with the North Central Association in 1994 when an 18-member NCA team will visit the College and re-accredit it as a single institution, rather than 13 regional accreditations.

To prepare for this evaluation visit, the College implemented a 24-month, statewide self-study. A central element of the self-study was the creation of Ivy Tech's first All-College Institutional Effectiveness Plan. This plan goes beyond North Central's assessment requirements related to student achievement and addresses all functional elements of the College's operation.

The development of the Plan was anchored in the College's mission and had extensive faculty involvement. Student academic achievement remains the heart of the Plan with all other elements either directly or indirectly in support of student success. An Academic Program Review Model with two primary components was initiated in the Spring, 1994. The first component addresses Curriculum Review; the second component addresses an Administrative Program Review. Together,

these components will ensure that Ivy Tech's instructional programs are meeting the needs of Indiana's workforce and are operated with fiscal and academic integrity.

Other major portions of the Plan address the functional areas of Student Services, Human Resources, Business and Industry Training (BIT), and College Administration. A total of 21 assessment activities are included in the Plan and are being carried out through the authority of designated Regional Task Forces for Institutional Effectiveness. These task forces have broad-based campus representation and are an integral factor in the implementation of this college-wide effectiveness plan.

This article will provide a brief history of the development of the Plan, an overview of the assessment activities contained in the Plan, and describe the structures and processes which ensure that information gathered through the Plan is used for continuous quality improvement efforts.

Development of the Plan

To conduct this massive, multi-faceted self study effort, a Steering Committee and fourteen state-wide subcommittees were formed to address various areas of the College. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee was charged with designing an All-College Institutional Effectiveness Plan which would allow the system to collect and compare data in a uniform way about the most essential elements of operation. While the organizational structure of the College includes a Central Office, the actual administration of the College has been de-centralized over time to allow the greatest flexibility in meeting local needs of the communities and regions in which they reside.

Striking a delicate balance between preserving the autonomy of regions in local decision-making and ensuring the availability of consistent data on key operational components became the subject of much academic and political debate. Clearly all felt a commitment to maintaining and improving standards of quality within the College. Just as clearly, most felt strongly about the approaches and strategies for consistency. As an example, all thirteen regions used student course evaluations as a measure of student satisfaction and instructional effectiveness. Each of the thirteen regions, however, used a different instrument making it impossible to take a state-wide "pulse" of our primary stakeholder group, students, as it related to instruction. One outcome of the Committee's work was the selection of a consistent, statewide course evaluation instrument which was implemented in 1994.

Team-building, consensus-building, and constant, accurate communication proved to be the essential ingredients for the successful development of this Plan. Campus leaders who possessed these abilities were quickly identified as "key communicators" and provided invaluable assistance in the almost constant in-service activities needed to seek input and keep nearly 2000 employees advised of the development of the Plan as time went on.

These "key communicators" were identified by the Vice President/Chancellors who are the chief executive officers for each of the regions.
Chancellors appointed these individuals to serve on the Regional Task Forces for Institutional Effectiveness mentioned earlier. The Self-Study Director asked only that

the chief academic officer of each region chair or co-chair the committee, and suggested that all functional areas be represented.

One of the first activities undertaken with the Task Forces was an assignment to participate in a survey which listed over 150 current assessment activities to determine which activities were deemed most critical in assessing the overall institutional effectiveness of the College. Surveys were administered to faculty, regional administrative personnel, and Task Force members. The regional participation rate was 100%. This survey was actually done twice, the second time in a slightly modified form to allow for input regarding any new assessment activities deemed to be needed but not yet in place. Twenty-one effectiveness indicators were chosen to include in the All-College Institutional Effectiveness Plan as a result of this process.

Once this activity cycle was completed, a review of the College's mission was undertaken in order to clearly link assessment activities with the College's approved mission statement and associated goals for the next decade. This was done through a mission analysis relative to the identified effectiveness indicators and through a college-wide mission survey of full-time faculty and staff which provided a perspective on the actual practice of our professionals in carrying out the mission.

Once the effectiveness indicators had been agreed upon, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee set about defining the scope of the assessment activities and devising implementation strategies for each of the identified elements.

Ease of administration, availability of human resources, and cost were a few of the principal factors considered in this exercise. Some assessment activities were fairly easily folded into this exercise, particularly those which involved nationally normed assessment instruments with a defined implementation strategy and pathway for analysis. Others had to be developed locally with accompanying implementation strategies. All surveys were required to be approved and scheduled for implementation through the Office of the Self-Study Director who provided both a quality check and "traffic control" so as not to inundate the system with an overload of survey activity.

The approval mechanisms in a system as large as Ivy Tech are time-consuming, repetitive, and, occasionally, frustrating. The need for consensus building and accurate information cannot be overstated as an organization goes through the "buy in" process. All state-wide management groups were included in a statewide review of the development of the plan as it neared completion. Input was gathered and changes were made all the way through the process. This process was necessary not only to solidify the "buy in" needed to make the plan work, but also to assure that the plan fit appropriately with existing planning and research activities already underway within the College.

Assessment Activities: Instruction

In the Instructional area, the Plan covers three major subtopics. Curriculum Review is actually an extension of a curriculum reform process that Ivy Tech initiated in 1992. At that time, statewide faculty committees were convened to review every

course in every academic division. Standard course outlines and objectives were produced and approved through this process. A number of courses were deleted from the old course inventory and several new courses were created, particularly in the area of general education. Curriculum Review will encompass a quality check on the new curriculum to assure that the stated objectives are meeting the goals of curriculum reform and will provide an opportunity for revision or change.

In addition to a thorough review of course objectives and student performance, Curriculum Review will include the following assessment activities:

* Course Completion Rates
* Analysis of Student Transfer Rates
* ASSET (Basic Skills Assessment)
* CAAP (Assessment of General Education Outcomes)
* Student/Faculty Course Evaluation (SUMMA)
* Program Outcome Measures (to include Instructor Developed Outcomes, Prescribed Technical Outcomes, Pass Rates on Licensure/Certification Exams)

Administrative Program Review will encompass the collection and analysis of programmatic information not directly related to curricular issues. Assessment activities in this area are designed to give program administrators the information needed to assure program quality and efficient use of resources, both fiscal and human. Specific assessment activities include:

* Retention rates
* Enrollment trend information
* FTE trend information
* Program FTE: Faculty FTE
* Credit Hours taught by Full- and Part-time faculty
* Degrees Awarded
* Graduate Survey information
* Employer Survey information
* Advisory Committee Survey information

* Program accreditation audit
* Faculty credential audit

A Library Usage Survey is a third topic in instructional assessment activities which assesses the degree and pattern of use of the library by both students and faculty at Ivy Tech. Both groups were asked to indicate their frequency of use of library services, the types of services used, and their satisfaction with the quality of services provided. Included in this survey were questions related to reasons why faculty and students do NOT use the Ivy Tech library and what suggestions could be offered for improvements in these or other factors related to the use of the libraries. Student responses were grouped by program and degree option; faculty responses were grouped according to employment classification (i.e. full-time faculty, part-time faculty, division chair, etc.) All results were reported regionally and state-wide.

Assessment Activities: Student Services

Effectiveness indicators in Student Services are designed to give a broad picture of the student's experience both while enrolled and upon completion of their educational objectives. Assessment activities include:

* ACT Student Opinion Survey
* Former Student Survey
* Student Demographic Profile
* Employer Survey

Assessment Activities: Human Resources, BIT, and College Administration

The Human Resources Committee constructed a Faculty and Staff Demographic Profile which allows the College to proactively address its current and future personnel needs in a consistent and orderly manner. An Institutional Climate

Survey was implemented to "take the temperature" of the organization and to address the issues of motivation, leadership, communication, and morale.

A significant and growing portion of Ivy Tech's operation is the delivery of customized training and economic development activities through Business and Industry Training. A locally developed Community Satisfaction Survey was implemented that gathered perceptions of quality and identified areas of need which this arm of the College addresses.

The Treasurer's Office will be responsible for supplying trend information regarding capital, instructional, and instructional support expenditure trends. This information will be supplied to appropriate statewide management groups as an oversight activity and to monitor the proportion of our College-wide budget going to support these activities.

Structures and Processes

In nearly every instance, existing College structures are being utilized to support and implement the All-College Institutional Effectiveness Plan. In some cases, statewide management groups which had been dormant for a time have been reactivated and invigorated by this process. Participative management is a prerequisite to the successful implementation of the Plan.

Especially important to a multi-campus system, decision-making authority has been carefully preserved at the regional level while leaving room for state-wide decision-making through the use of aggregate data and regional representation on statewide management groups. Both regional and state planning processes have

been integrated into the Institutional Effectiveness Plan. A step-by-step description of process for each assessment activity and the structures needed to support that activity have been outlined in a "Structures and Processes" document which has been used to in-service campus personnel and Regional Task Forces for Institutional Effectiveness.

Conclusion

The development of an institutional effectiveness plan must be anchored in the institution's mission and be based on broad participation from all of the College's constituencies. It must have the support of senior administration and the blessing of the President. The development of a plan of this magnitude maximizes the human resources available to it and minimizes the cost associated with it. It takes time and patience. The reward is a comprehensive plan that promises continual quality improvement to its academic community, faculty, staff, and students. While Ivy Tech regards this activity as a valuable and successful one for the College, the real test will be in its implementation and, ultimately, the use of the data generated from the Plan.